

*Indiana Jones
and the Caseus Aureus et Argentus*

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CHAPTER ONE

Dr. Henry “Indiana” Jones, Jr. is the picture of quintessential, popular college professor: gray tweed suit with red bow tie, black wire rimmed glasses, mousey-brown hair neatly cut and combed, and a bit over six feet tall with rugged good looks and intelligent, hazel eyes.

Professor Jones is also the perfect picture of a very bored professor. He sits at his office desk slouched in his chair staring at the back wall which is covered with a shelf holding old pottery from dig sites. He sighs.

Jones looks down at the big stack of papers on his desk. He picks one up and reads through it. He sighs again, and sets it back down.

“I need something to do,” says Jones to himself. “I need someplace to go. *Anywhere.*” He thinks a moment, then gets out of his chair and exits his office.

Charlene, Professor Jones’ secretary looks up. “Heading to your next class early?”

“Not on this plane of existence,” deadpans Jones. “I’m going to see Marcus.”

“You’re that desperate, huh?” chuckles Charlene.

Jones just grunts and leaves the room proper.

Marcus Brody, a portly English gentleman in his sixties is the curator of the Museum of Natural History and Indiana Jones’ closest friend. He is currently sitting in his office at his desk reading the daily paper when Indiana Jones walks in.

“Marcus!” whines Indiana. “Help me!”

Marcus sets the paper down. “Help you with what?”

“Send me somewhere to go find something,” he begs. “Anything!”

“I’m sorry, Indiana,” apologizes Marcus, “but the museum has no expeditions on the table at the moment, and none planned for the immediate future as well.”

“Make one up!” says Indiana. He starts to pace. “How about... uh... I got it! Adam and Eve’s burial ground!” he suggests.

Marcus gives him a disappointed look. “Indiana...”

“Oh, come on!” moans Indiana. “I’ve been stuck on campus for a semester and a half with nothing to do but grade terms papers and try to get it through a couple students’ heads that cuneiform wasn’t made by aliens!”

“Are they still thinking that?” asks Marcus.

“Yes!” exclaims Indiana, huffy. “Even since that goddamn ‘War of the Worlds’ radio broadcast last year! Welcome to 1939, the year of my personal Hell!”

“I’m very sorry, Indiana,” sympathizes Marcus.

Indiana just grunts.

“Well, there is something you could do tonight to take your mind off of all of this unpleasantness,” says Marcus.

“And what would that be?” asks Indiana.

“The Annual Faculty Mixer,” answers Marcus.

Indiana looks like he’s just been shot. “Oh, hell no! Marcus, you know about me and those things!”

Marcus frowns, “Indiana, you have not gone to one for the past three years...”

“There’s a good reason for it too,” interrupts Indiana. “Let’s keep the trend going.”

“Indiana, you are going to go to the mixer this evening,” orders Marcus. “The Dean is not happy that you haven’t been going. I’ve heard that he is considering not letting you go on another expedition for the museum until you attend a faculty mixer.”

Indiana scowls, “That’s blackmail!”

Marcus just shrugs.

Indiana sighs in defeat. “Fine, I’ll go.”

“Very good, Indiana,” smiles Marcus. “And remember, it’s evening attire.”

“I have to wear a monkey suit, too?” squeals Jones. “Aw, damn!”

Marcus just chuckles.

Mike Mouse is currently dressed in his Mighty Mouse costume and is currently chasing down one Jeffrey Dain through the back streets of Mouseville. A year ago Jeffrey’s dimension’s time when Jeffrey came through to Mike’s dimension for good, Jeffrey changed into a sewer rat. An ugly one.

Oil Can Harry kept Jeffrey on his staff as an agent. Jeffrey soon became quite valuable as an enforcer. With his claws and teeth, mice definitely had something to fear.

As time went on, Oil Can Harry discovered something in an old book. A *really* old book. This book told of a mouse with god-like powers that would come to their world.

As Harry read, he figured out the book was talking about the current Mighty Mouse. But the book also went on to say that buried within long lost ruins on one side of their world was a talisman that could destroy this “god-mouse.” And on the other side was another talisman that when combined with the first would make the “god-mouse” immortal and have no weakness at all.

Harry decided that he would go after the first talisman and completely ignore the second one, obviously. But to do so, he would need an experienced archaeologist. And wouldn’t you know it? He’s got Jeffrey Dain. But, where to start looking?

Harry continued to read the book and read that there are two maps, one for each talisman. One of the maps described sounded like a map displayed in the Mouseville Museum of History.

And so, Harry sent Jeffrey Dain to “acquire” the map in question.

Jeffrey’s heart is pounding and he’s running through the back alleys as fast as he can. He’s got the map rolled up in his clawed right hand as he goes. He turns a corner and screeches to a halt, coming to a dead end. He whips around to double-back, but freezes. Mike as Mighty Mouse is hovering off the street, arms crossed over his chest, right in front of him.

“Where are you going with that map, Jeffrey?” demands Mike.

“None of your business,” retorts Jeffrey.

“Another one of Harry’s errands?” asks Mike with a cocked eyebrow.

Jeffrey doesn’t reply.

Mike nods, drops to the street, then walks toward Jeffrey, one hand out. “Hand it over.”

“No way. This map is going to be put to some good use for once,” says Jeffrey. “And so am I. And when it’s all over, you’ll be part of a history book.”

Jeffrey surprises Mike by side-swiping him with his claws. Mike hits the side of the building. This gives Jeffrey enough time to make a quick escape down a sewer main.

Mike sighs and shakes his head. "Now what are you up to, Harry? Why do you need an old map?" He thinks. Hard. "I wonder..." He leaps into the air and heads for the Mouseville Museum.

Mike is sitting in the office of the curator of the Mouseville Museum. He talks with an older gray-furred mouse with gray hair and a gray beard that sits behind a desk.

"So, this map leads to a very old and important artifact?" asks Mike.

"Incredibly important," nods the curator. "The artifact was created at the same time the dimensional gate was created. They have to deal with the prophesied 'god-mouse'. It's extremely important you beat Oil Can Harry to the artifact."

"Do you have any archaeologists available to help me go look for it?" asks Mike.

"Unfortunately, I don't," answers the curator.

Mike thinks. Then, a light turns on. "I think I know just the guy to help me out on this. Let's just hope he says 'yes'. Thanks a lot, Dr. Cheddararm!" He runs out of the office.

Mike finds himself walking out of the small stone pyramid temple into the hot, steamy Congo mid-afternoon. He looks himself over. He's still dressed in his yellow and red costume, but now he's about a 5'9" tall, black-haired, blue-eyed human with humungous muscles and superhuman powers leaking out his pores.

Mike leaps into the air and starts his long flight toward New York City, U.S. of A.

Marcus Brody is just putting on his hat at the end of the day when he hears a knock on his office door. He checks his watch. Who on earth is here at this time of day? He opens the door and has a royal heart attack.

"Good afternoon, Marcus!" smiles the now human formed Mike.

This is the first time Marcus has seen Mike in his costume. He can't believe Mike's muscle. "Mike?"

Mike nods.

"Uh... come in?" stammers Marcus.

"Thanks," smiles Mike. He walks on in.

Marcus carefully shuts the door. "May I say this is more than quite a surprise..."

"Is Indy around?" asks Mike, cutting to the chase.

"He's left for the day," answers Marcus, still not quite believing Mike is actually in his office. "But he'll be returning this evening for the Faculty Mixer."

"Oh," says Mike.

"May I inquire as to why you're here?" asks Marcus carefully.

"Sure," nods Mike. "See, Oil Can Harry, a cat in my dimension, stole this old map from our museum. He's using it to go look for something. Something important and old, I think, because he's got Jeffrey Dain helping him because Jeffrey's been trained in archaeology. So I thought I'd come and ask Indiana if he'd like to come back to Mouseville with me and help me get the map back and find this thing before Harry and Jeffrey does."

Marcus is grinning. "Mike, you are a life-saver. Indiana is suffering from a horrible case of cabin fever. I can almost guarantee he'll jump at the chance to go after this artifact with you."

"Oh! Good!" grins Mike.

"I tell you what," suggests Marcus. "Come with me to mixer this evening and ask Indiana yourself."

"Alright," agrees Mike.

Dr. Indiana Jones adjusts his black bowtie of his formal tuxedo for the zillionth time of the evening. He looks all around at the assorted college faculty, all dressed in tuxedos and evening gowns drinking champagne, munching on hors d'ovres and caviar. God he hates this.

"Oh, Dr. Jones!" calls out a pompous voice from just behind him.

Indiana cringes, "God not him." He turns around and greets the oncoming gentleman with a forced smile, "Brad..."

"Still having... ah... what are they called... ah... 'mousettes'... yes, mousettes... chase you all around town?" needles Brad. "Or are their muscle-bound mouse friends threatening you again?"

Ever since Brad Gershwan, Professor of Celtic History sneaked a peak at his expedition journal, he hasn't had a moment's peace.

He's about to tell him off when he feels a tapping on his shoulder. He turns to see who it is. It's Marcus.

"Indiana, I've brought a friend of ours from out of town. I think you'd better say hello," advises Marcus.

Indiana's eyes go wide when he sees Mike walk up dressed in an elegant tuxedo that hugs his physique. He grins "Mike!"

"Good evening, Dr. Jones," smiles Mike.

"What the hell are you doing here?" grins Indiana.

"Well, I..." Mike starts to answer.

He is interrupted by a loud clearing of the throat from behind Indiana. Everybody turns and looks. It's Brad.

Indiana gets a sly look to his face. He turns around and whispers something to Mike.

Mike frowns. "Really?"

He whispers something else.

"That's not very nice!" says Mike.

He finishes whispering to him.

Mike nods. "Okay."

Indiana smiles and turns back to Brad. "Forgive my horrible manners, Brad. Let me introduce you to a very good friend of mine. Brad Gershwan... this is Mike Mouse."

Brad laughs. "You're supposed to be the mouse from Jones' little 'trip' to the 'other dimension', right?" He holds out his hand for a shake.

Mike takes it. "Yup." He squeezes. Hard.

Brad howls and drops his knees as he feels his hand break with a loud "crunch."

Indiana chuckles. "Next time, watch your mouth, Brad."

Mike releases him. Brad holds his hand in agony.

“Thanks, Mike,” appreciates Indiana, patting him on the back.

“You’re very welcome, Indy,” smiles Mike.

“This night didn’t turn out so bad after all,” Indiana quips.

Marcus chuckles.

Indiana chuckles, too. “Okay, so what are you really here for?” he asks of Mike.

“Like I started to say,” answers Mike. “I was wondering if you would like to come back to Mouseville and help me beat Oil Can Harry and Jeffrey Dain in finding an old artifact. He stole a map to it from our museum, so it must be important, but that’s all I know about it.”

By now, Indiana Jones grinning like a Cheshire cat. “Hot damn! I’m free! Ha, ha! Marcus, as of now I’m on sabbatical, *and* I’m leaving this party. Bye!” He grabs Mike by the arm, “Let’s get outta here!”

CHAPTER TWO

After a good night's rest, Indiana Jones and Mike Mouse set out across the Atlantic back to the heart of the Congo to the temple where the dimensional wrap gate lay. As Mike flies them there, they talk about the map.

"So what can you tell me about this map?" asks Indiana.

"Well, the map is the oldest artifact in the Mouseville Museum," says Mike. "It's thousands of years old my time. It has landmarks written in a dead language. That's pretty much all I know about it."

"And Harry's got it now?"

"Yeah, because Jeffrey Dain stole it for him."

"And he's probably got Jeffrey helping him because Jeffrey's been schooled in archaeology," surmises Indiana.

"Yup," affirms Mike.

"Well, the first thing we've got to do is talk to the head your museum about the map. Get more information on it," decides Indiana.

Mike starts dropping towards the dense jungle of the Congo. He makes an easy landing in front of a small, ancient stone pyramid shaped structure covered in vinery.

"Every get that déjà vu feeling?" quips Indiana.

Mike laughs and they head inside.

Indiana looks down as Mike drops himself and Jones through the gateway. Indiana feels mouse ears, fur, nose and tail growing on his body as he drops. When they break into open sky, he looks himself over. He wears his brown leather jacket, khaki shirt, brown pants, work boots, gun belt and holster, bag, bullwhip and Stetson fedora hat... but now he's covered in brown fur, has a long brown tail and has mouse ears and a long nose.

Indiana looks at Mike. Mike is still immensely muscled and dressed in his form-fitting yellow and red costume, but now he's covered in pitch-black, shiny fur with electric blue eyes, mouse ears, long nose and long tail.

"Do you want to go to the museum first?" asks Mike.

"That would be a very good idea," nods Indiana.

Mike shoots that way.

Indiana sees that the Mouseville Museum looks a lot like the museum back home. Same basic architecture style, too.

Mike lands in front of it and lets Indiana go. Indiana notices he starts getting questioning looks from passing Mouseville citizens.

"Who are they staring at, you or me?" asks Indiana.

"Probably both of us," shrugs Mike. "I'm like a celebrity. And you're carrying a gun and a *bullwhip*."

Indiana laughs. Mike laughs, too. They walk into the museum.

Indiana is fascinated by the Mouseville museum. You would think that because it's a dimension made of anthropomorphic mice that the history wouldn't be that involved. Well, it is. Indiana sees old weapons, inventions, armor, examples of languages

dead and forgotten, pottery, paintings, basically the same kind of things you'd find in a human museum.

Mike leads Indiana back to an office in the back of the museum. He knocks on the door.

"Come in!" calls out a voice from behind the door.

Mike opens the door and leads Indiana inside. Indiana sees a gray-furred mouse in a suit like he'd wear in glasses like he'd wear with gray hair and a gray beard sitting behind a large wooden desk looking over some paperwork. He looks up.

"Mighty Mouse!" he smiles.

"Dr. Cheddararm," greets Mike in his more robust voice.

Dr. Cheddar gets up from around his desk and shakes Mike's hand. He offers his hand to Indiana. "And you are?"

"Dr. Indiana Jones," he introduces himself.

"He's an archaeologist," says Mike. "The best the human's dimension has to offer, and my personal friend. I told you I could get him."

Indiana blinks in surprise. Mike told this Dr. Cheddararm about him?

Mike sees Indiana's questioning look. "Dr. Cheddararm is my equivalent of your Marcus Brody."

"Ah," smiles Indiana.

"Could you tell me a bit more about yourself?" asks Cheddararm. "More about your specialty areas?"

"Certainly," nods Indiana. "I specialize in field work for rare antiquities, epigraphy, and the Occult."

"Excellent," smiles Dr. Cheddararm.

"Could you tell me why Harry would want that map so badly?" asks Indiana, getting right to the point.

"Yes," nods Cheddararm. "The map shows the way to an ancient ruin where an artifact is buried. The artifact is a talisman that can destroy a prophesied 'god-mouse'."

"There is no such thing as a 'god-mouse'," says Mike.

"What's the prophecy about the 'god-mouse'?" asks Indiana.

Dr. Cheddararm describes Mike to Indiana. "There is an ancient book of prophecy that talks of a coming 'god-mouse'. The book is called 'Liber Oraculum de Mus Deus'."

"The Prophecy of the God Mouse'," nods Indiana. "Latin. I didn't know you had Latin in your dimension."

Cheddararm nods, "The language was brought here by a human in armor many, many years ago."

"Probably a Roman soldier," muses Indiana. "What does the book say about the god-mouse?"

"The book says that a mouse will come to our world that will have the strength of thousands, he will be unmatched. He will ride the wind, have the speed of lightning, he won't be able to be wounded in any way," answers Cheddararm.

Indiana looks at Mike. "Sound familiar, 'god-mouse'?"

"The book goes on to say that buried in some ancient ruins is a talisman that when given to the god-mouse can kill him. There's an old map to it. But there's also a second talisman on the opposite side of our world that when combined with the first will make

the 'god-mouse' immortal and have absolutely no weakness and even more powerful," continues Cheddararm.

"But... that's just an old story..." says Mike.

Indiana sighs, "Mike, when you've been in this business as long as I have, you run into things that shouldn't exist that do. You're one of them. Now I think this talisman might exist, too. And if that's the case, that means we have to find it before Harry and Jeffrey do to keep you alive."

"But we won't be able to!" protests Mike. "They've got the map!"

"I believe I can help you out there, gentlemice," smiles Dr. Cheddararm. "I made a copy of the map in case anything happened to the original. I'll be happy to let you have it."

Indiana grins. "Alright, Doc! You're my kind'a guy."

Dr. Cheddararm opens his top desk drawer and withdraws a piece of paper. He hands it to Indiana. Indiana looks it over, then hands it to Mike. Mike looks it over.

"The ruins are in Rattisharn territory," says Mike.

"What's so big about that?" asks Indiana.

"The Rattisharns are *very* territorial," answers Cheddararm. "It's best to bring some sort of gift to them and ask for permission to be in their land before digging around and doing anything first."

"Huh," thinks Indiana. "Kind of like the desert Nomads back home." He thinks some more. "What kind of gifts do they like?"

"Extremely rare and expensive cheeses," answers Cheddararm.

"Okay," nods Indiana. "We'll keep that in mind."

Mike flies Indiana next to Pearl's house. It was Indiana's idea to have Pearl join them on their quest. He said the Rattisharns would be impressed to have a beautiful mousette bring them their gift personally, and Mike said Pearl is a pro at picking out the best cheeses anyway.

Indiana sees Pearl's home is a quaint, small one-story home painted white with pink trim and a light gray shingled roof. Mike rings the doorbell. A few moments later, Pearl answers the door.

She grins when she sees them standing there, and is pleasantly surprised to see Indiana Jones with Mike.

"Mighty Mouse! And Indiana! What a nice surprise! What are you doing here?" asks Pearl happily.

"Can we come in and chat for a bit and we'll tell you everything?" asks Mike.

"Sure," nods Pearl. "Come on in." She waves them in.

"So that's what's going on," finishes Indiana.

Pearl, Mike and Indiana are seated in Pearl's living room chatting about the expedition. Pearl and Mike are on her couch while Indiana sits in a recliner.

"Do you believe it's actually true?" asks Pearl.

"Well, yeah," nods Mike. "I mean, I exist, so the book's prophecy came true, didn't it?"

"Well, yeah... I guess," agrees Pearl.

“And Indiana says he’s seen a *lot* of stuff through the years he’s worked in the field, and he believes this thing’s the real deal, so I’m going with him on this one,” says Mike.

“Okay,” nods Pearl. “Count me in. I don’t want to see you knocked off by Harry and Jeffrey by some old artifact.”

“Great!” grins Mike. “Thanks a lot, Pearl!”

“So, what do we have to do first?” asks Pearl.

“We need you to help us pick out the most expensive and rarest cheese,” says Indiana.

“What for?”

“We need to impress the Rattisharns,” answers Indiana.

“Oh. Okay,” she nods. “We’ll go to ‘Tres Cheese’ downtown. They’ve got the best selection.”

Indiana looks all around at the huge selection of cheeses inside “Tres Cheese” in wonder. He never knew this many kinds of cheeses existed!

Mike looks at him and chuckles. “Close your mouth, Indy. It’s dragging on the floor.”

“I’m sorry. I just never knew this many kinds of cheese existed,” says Indiana.

Mike chuckles.

Pearl leads them to an aisle with a glass case in which there is cheese wrapped in gold and shiny red foil. A smartly-dressed sales mouse stands in front of the case.

“Pardon me, but I’d like to purchase three blocks of ‘Caseus Aureus’ please,” requests Pearl.

The sales mouse nods, “Yes ma’am.” He turns around, unlocks the case, opens it, and withdraws three large rectangles of the wrapped cheese. He closes and re-locks the case.

The sales mouse then rings Pearl up. “That will be 300 ‘Ms’ please.”

Pearl nods and opens a small book. She writes out something in the book, tears out a piece of paper, and hands it to the sales mouse. The sales mouse looks it over, nods, then hands the three blocks of cheese to Pearl.

“You have a very nice day, ma’am,” smiles the sales mouse.

“Thanks you very much,” returns Pearl.

Pearl, Indiana and Mike all head out of the store.

Indiana whispers to Mike on the way out, “How much is 300 ‘Ms’ to dollars?”

“About \$300 dollars,” Mike whispers back.

Indiana whistles.

Oil Can Harry and Jeffrey Dain make their way across the rough terrain of the barren landscape of the Kitty Litter Desert in their Jeep. They lead of contingency of cats loaded up with archaeology equipment. As they drive, they see a dust cloud approach them up ahead. They slow down their caravan and stop as the cloud draws closer.

The cloud forms into a large band of huge mice on horseback in desert clothing armed with swords and guns. The leader is brown-furred and wears a white head-cloth, and also does all the talking.

“Black cat and large rat! What are you doing in the territory of the Rattisharns?” demands the mouse.

“Great leader of the Rattisharns,” schmoozes Harry, “we are searching for an ancient relic. One that is buried in old ruins within your land.”

“You search for the Caseus Aureus?” asks the mouse.

“Yes,” smiles Harry.

“You cannot have it!” replies the mouse.

Harry chuckles coldly. “That is where you are wrong, mouse. We are here to take it and get rid of Mighty Mouse for good!” He turns around in his Jeep and yells out to the rest of the cats, “Follow us onward!”

Harry sits back down and the caravan blows by the Rattisharns. The Rattisharns yell angrily at Harry and the caravan, but that’s all they can really do at this point.

The leader of the Rattisharns shakes his head. “May the god-mouse come and take his nine-lives one-by-one...”

CHAPTER THREE

Indiana Jones, Mike and Pearl find themselves driving through the middle of the Kitty Litter Desert early the next morning. Indiana decided they needed to drive so they could be able to take all of the needed equipment easier.

As they drive, they see a cloud approaching in the distance. Mike tells them all what it is.

“The Rattisharns are approaching on horseback,” says Mike.

Indiana brings the Jeep to a stop and waits for the Rattisharns. The Rattisharns arrive a few moments later.

“What are you doing in Rattisharn territory?” asks the leader.

Mike flies out of the Jeep and does the talking. All of the Rattisharns starts chattering when they see him.

“Great Rattisharn leader, I’m Mighty Mouse. These are my friends, Dr. Indiana Jones, an archaeologist, and Pearl Pureheart, my mousettefriend,” says Mike. “We’re here in your land looking for some old ruins trying to find an old artifact.”

The Rattisharn leader gets off his horse. “I am Yaric Rattisharn. A black cat with a large rat came this way before you looking for the Caseus Aureus. We did not give him permission to do so, but he went on anyway.”

Mike motions for Indiana and Pearl to come forward. They do so. Mike, Pearl and Indiana present Yaric with the wrapped cheese.

“We bring you gifts in exchange for your permission to be in your land to look for the artifact,” says Mike.

Yaric takes the cheese and nods, “We accept your gift with thanks. This is indeed fine cheese. Please, accompany us back to our tents and we will aid you in your quest. We have something you will need.” He climbs back on his horse.

Mike grins, and he and Indiana and Pearl get back in the Jeep and follow the Rattisharns.

Indiana looks around the Rattishan camp with interest. It looks just like a desert Nomad camp back in his dimension. Then tents are very colorful and large. There are mousettes and mouselings around with fire pits outside the tents.

Indiana parks the Jeep in the middle of the camp. Yaric leads Indiana and party to the largest tent in the center of the camp, a big blue and gold one. They all go inside.

Yaric motions for Indiana, Pearl and Mike to sit on some comfortable red pillows. They sit as Yaric takes his own seat.

Yaric opens the conversation. “So, you are the ‘god-mouse’ come as prophesied,” he says to Mike.

“I guess so,” shrugs Mike.

“That means this black cat wishes to destroy you with the Caseus Aureus,” surmises Yaric.

Indiana and Mike nod.

“Does he know of the Caseus Argenteus?” asks Yaric.

“The what?” asks Mike.

“The Silver Cheese,” translates Indiana. “The other talisman, right?”

Yaric nods.

“If he knows about the first, then he probably knows about the second,” says Indiana.

“He may know, but he shall not find it. You shall,” states Yaric. He nods to a Rattisharn mouse standing in just inside the tent behind Indiana.

The mouse hands a rolled up piece of paper to Indiana. Indiana takes it, unrolls it and looks it over.

“That is the map to the Caseus Argenteus. To make the ‘god-mouse’ a true ‘god-mouse’, you must speak the ancient text when the two talismans are together,” says Yaric. He hands over a small scroll to Indiana.

Indiana takes it and unrolls it. It’s got something written on it in a totally unknown language. “I’ll need some time to translate this...”

“You are welcome to stay here to work,” offers Yaric.

“Thank you very much,” smiles Indiana accepting the offer.

It’s very late at night. Indiana rubs his eyes. He’s got half of the scroll translated.

“Knock, knock...”

Indiana turns around at the sound of the familiar voice. “Hey, Mike.”

Mike smiles and walks into the tent the Rattisharns put up for Indiana to sleep in. “How’s it going?”

“I wish I had a codex,” replies Indiana. “But I’ve got about half of it done, so it’s going okay.”

Mike nods. “I brought you something.” He offers a cup of steaming something to him.

Indiana takes it and sniffs it. He grins. “Coffee. Aw, Mike. You’re a life-saver.” He takes a sip. “Mm.”

“So... what’s the scroll say so far?” asks Mike, curious.

“Well, so far the scroll talks about making the ‘god-mouse’ live for eternity and having the strength of ages,” answers Indiana.

“Do think that’s possible?” asks Mike.

“I think anything’s possible,” shrugs Indiana.

Mike nods and thinks it over. “I don’t know if I want to live forever...”

“It’s definitely something to think about,” agrees Indiana.

Mike thinks some more. Then, “Well, I’ll let you get back to your work. Have a nice night, Indy.”

“You, too, Mike. Thanks for the coffee,” smiles Indiana, giving him a wave.

Mike waves back and heads on out.

Pearl walks out of her tent to see Mike sitting outside of his little tent by a fire staring at it, arms on his knees which are up to his chest. She walks over to see what’s on his mind.

“Hey, Mighty Mouse. You look lost in thought. What’s on your mind?” asks Pearl, taking a seat beside him.

Mike looks at her. “I’ve been thinking about the whole turning immortal thing. I don’t know if I want to do it. I don’t know if I can handle living forever while everybody else dies off around me.”

“Well, look at it this way. “You’ll *always* be needed. In every generation there will be a need for Mighty Mouse,” says Pearl. “And you may not have a choice. If Harry tries killing you off with that other talisman, we may have to save your life with the second one.”

Mike sighs and nods.

Indiana, Mike and Pearl stand by their Jeep the next morning getting ready to leave. Indiana shakes Yaric’s hand.

“Thanks for everything, Yaric,” appreciates Indiana.

“And thank you, Dr. Jones. May Mighty Mouse take the black cat’s nine lives one-by-one,” says Yaric.

Everyone laughs.

Indiana and group get into the Jeep. Indiana starts the vehicle then drives off into the desert.

Harry and Jeffrey stand overlooking an expanse of red sand with small tells.

“Are you sure this is the place?” asks Harry.

“Positive,” nods Jeffrey. “The landscape is classic telling. We’re at the right spot.”

“Where do we start digging?” asks Harry.

“According to the book, the town was laid out like a maze,” answers Jeffrey. “We have to find the center of the maze. That’s where we’ll start digging. That’s where the temple would have been and where the talisman would have been kept.”

Harry nods. He yells out orders to all the cats accompanying him. The cats grab their digging equipment and start getting to work.

Indiana drives the Jeep up to a large hill and parks it.

“I hear a bunch of folks talking and digging,” says Mike.

“Where?” asks Indiana.

“Over the hill,” answers Mike.

“Let’s go take a peek,” says Indiana.

Indiana, Mike and Pearl climb out of the Jeep, climb up the hill, and peek over the top of it. They see Harry, Jeffrey and all the cats busy in the dig site looking for the talisman.

The site has been completely dug out. They see the foundations of a maze-like small city made of rock. All of the cats are focusing on the center of the dig site.

“Looks like Jeffrey’s got Harry doing the Crete method of digging,” says Indiana.

“What do you mean?” asks Mike.

“The layout of the ruins is like a maze. Jeffrey thinks the talisman’s gonna be in the center of it. Like the way out of Crete’s infamous maze. But Jeffrey’s got it all wrong,” says Indiana.

“How does he have is wrong?”

“The talismans were made at the same time that the dimensional gate was made,” says Indiana.

“They were?” asks Mike, surprised.

Indiana nods. "I recognized a few of the characters on the scroll. They were the same that are on the temple floor. There were certain four characters: a sun, a star, and a moon above a triangle."

"Those are the ones that tell where the gate switch is," says Mike.

"Exactly," nods Indiana. "They also tell us where the talisman is in relation to where we are here at the ruins."

"They do?" asks Mike.

"They sure do," says Indiana. "We'll have to wait until sundown, but you'll see then."

Harry is not a happy cat. His cats have been digging in the center of the ruins all day and have come up with nothing.

"Mr. Dain!" he yells. "Why haven't we found it yet?"

"I don't know," replies Jeffrey. "Maybe there's a piece of the puzzle missing, or maybe somebody already found it before us."

Harry gets in his face. "For your sake, that had better not have happened! Where do we dig next?"

"Let's start digging at the corners," suggests Jeffrey.

Harry looks at the sun going down. "We'll do so in the morning. Cats! Break for the night!"

Everyone breaks up and retires to their respective tents for the evening.

Indiana, Mike and Pearl watch Harry, Jeffrey and company head in for the night.

"Okay, now it's our turn to work," nods Indiana. He sets up a surveyor's scope on top of the tall hill overlooking the ruins and looks through it. First he measures an angle coming from the setting sun.

"Forty-five degrees from the west," measures Indiana.

Pearl jots it down in a notepad.

Indiana looks to the east and sees the moon starting to come up. He looks through the surveyor scope again. "Forty-five degree from the east."

Pearl jots that down.

Indiana looks through the surveyor's scope, adjusts it, then looks straight up. He smiles when he sees the star in question. It's not really a star at all. It's a planet. A red one.

"Mars," smiles Indiana. He looks back through the scope and zooms in on a point just beyond the ruins on a small tell right underneath Mars. "Bingo. Let's go digging, kids."

Indiana, Mike and Pearl creep silently around the ruins and Harry's camp in the middle of the cool desert night toward the tell Indiana spotted with his surveyor's scope. They all carry shovels.

"Okay, guys," whispers Indiana. "Let's get to it."

They all start to dig. After about an hour of digging, Indiana's shovel clanks on something hard.

“Hold it,” whispers Indiana. He sets his shovel down, then crouches down and digs with his hands. He clears away the loose sand and dirt and small rocks and finds a small, rusted metal box. He pulls it out of the ground.

“Open this for me, Mighty Mouse,” requests Indiana.

Mike nods. He takes the box and digs his fingers into the top of it. There’s a high-pitched squeal as Mike tears the top off of it. Indiana cringes.

“Sorry,” apologizes Mike in a whisper. He hands the box back to Indiana.

Indiana looks into the box. He reaches inside and pulls out a medium-sized, golden triangle in the design of a piece of Swiss cheese. It is hanging on a thin, golden neck chain.

“That’s the Caseus Aureus, huh?” asks Mike.

“Indeed it is, repugnant rodent!”

Indiana, Mike and Pearl whip their heads around at the sound of the familiar and unwelcome Bass voice. They see they’re surrounded by Harry, Jeffrey, and their accompanying cats.

Jeffrey steps forward. “*Baca hairt misa rhet!*”

The talisman in Indiana’s hand starts to glow. It suddenly fires off a bright beam of light at Mike. Mike cries out as he’s covered in the light, and falls to the ground, writhing in pain.

“Mighty Mouse!” exclaims Pearl.

Jeffrey lunges forward and snags the talisman from Indiana’s hand. Indiana retaliates with a well-placed right cross to Jeffrey’s jaw and sends him sprawling. He grabs Mike and pulls him to his feet.

“Fly us outta here!” yells Indiana.

Mike nods, wraps his arms around Indiana and Pearl, and leaps into the air. But instead of going up, he drags everybody right back down again.

“I can’t fly!” exclaims Mike in horror.

“Shit!” yells Indiana.

Harry breaks out in evil laughter.

“Run!” yells out Indiana.

Pearl, Mike and Indiana run like crazy for their Jeep.

“After them!” yells Harry.

Indiana guns the Jeep tears into the desert with a spray of desert sand and rock behind him.

Mike and Pearl look behind them and sees four Jeeps of cats following in hot pursuit. Mike sees a cat in each Jeep pull out a rifle. Reports of gunfire sound. Bullets ricochet off the back of their Jeep.

“They’re shooting!” yells Mike.

“Block their bullets, Mike!” instructs Indiana.

Mike nods. Another shot rings out. Mike cries out and blood flies when he’s hit in the shoulder.

“Mighty Mouse!” yells Pearl.

Indiana looks over his shoulder. He sees Mike grimacing and holding his bloody left shoulder. His invulnerability’s been stripped.

“Shit!” snarls Indiana. “Pearl, take over driving!”

She nods and switches places with Indiana. Indiana pulls out his own gun and points it at one of the rifle cats and fires. The cat goes down.

Indiana ducks as two more bullets ricochet off the back of the Jeep. “Mike! Get down in the seat! Now!”

Mike nods and scrunches down in the Jeep’s back seat. Indiana takes aim at another rifle-bearing cat. He shoots two more times. That cat goes down.

Harry decides to let Mighty Mouse and the rest go for now. He gets on the radio. “Gentlecats, let them go. Mighty Mouse can’t do anything to us anymore. We’ll go after him later. Let’s let him sweat a while. Come back to camp.”

Indiana watches the four Jeeps of cats slow down and turn around, then head back to the ruins. He starts breathing easier. “Okay, kids. I think we’re in the clear for now.”

Mike groans.

Indiana holsters his gun and sits down beside Mike and checks him over. “Hey, bud. How’re you doing?”

“My shoulder is killing me,” moans Mike.

“Lemme look at it,” says Indiana.

Mike removes his hand. Indiana sees the bullet went deep.

“Well, we’ll need to get it out,” decides Indiana.

“Are we going back to Mouseville?” asks Mike.

“We don’t have time, and we can’t afford to,” answers Indiana. “If Mouseville sees you the way you are now...”

Mike nods. He sees what Indiana’s getting at. “Where are we going then?”

“We’re going west, old mouse,” smiles Indiana. “A long way west.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Mike grits his teeth and bites down on a piece of hard wood as Indiana works on getting the bullet out of his left shoulder. He grunts as Indiana successfully pulls it out. His shoulder bleeds anew. Indiana presses some gauze against it to stem the flow of blood.

Indiana rubs some antibiotic gel into the bullet wound, then tapes a bandage over the wound. "There ya go, bud."

Mike rolls his shoulder around. That's gonna be sore for awhile.

Indiana looks Mike up and down. "You know something? You don't look as big as you usually do."

Mike looks himself up and down. Indiana's right. He's starting to lose muscle mass.

"I think you're right. And I don't feel as strong, either," admits Mike.

"That means we've got to find the Caseus Argenteus," decides Indiana. "It's a matter of your survival. I also think now would be a good time to tell her who you really are, Mighty Mouse," he suggests.

"True," agrees Mike.

"Tell me what?" asks Pearl.

"Pearl, Mike Mouse and I are the same mouse," says Mike.

"Oh! That?" says Pearl. "I've known about that for a long time," she waves off.

Mike blinks in surprise. "You... you have?"

"Of course I have. I'm not that unobservant. All you did was change your voice and clothes. There is no other mouse in Mouseville with black fur and huge muscles except for you," states Pearl.

Indiana laughs. "I told you so, Mike!"

"I wonder how many other mice in Mouseville have figured this out," ponders Mike in his regular light voice.

"Probably not that many," answers Pearl, "because they don't take time to think. And please talk in your normal, light voice. I like it better."

Mike chuckles. "You got it."

Indiana walks to the edge of their slow-going sea vessel and leans on the rail. He breathes in the salty sea air and looks out over the clear, blue water.

Mike walks up beside him and also leans on the rail.

"How big is your Laguna Ocean, Mike?" asks Indiana.

"Well, in our dimension, our world is set up with two large land masses with the Laguna Ocean in between them. And it's pretty big." Answers Mike.

"And according to the second map, we have to go to the middle of the Bone continent which is on the other side of the Laguna Ocean," says Indiana.

"Right," nods Mike.

"Who lives on the Bone continent?" asks Indiana.

"Dogs, wolves and vultures," says Mike.

"Lovely," deadpans Indiana.

"But the dogs are friendly. I've got a number of really good friends there. I'm thinking I'm going to call on a small group of Pit Bulls to accompany us as security since I can't help us very well now," says Mike.

“That sounds like a good idea,” agrees Indiana.

Harry looks through his binoculars at Mighty Mouse’s ship in the distance. He grunts. “Mr. Dain!”

Jeffrey walks up to him. “Yes, sir?”

“Are you sure those dog disguises you ‘borrowed’ will suffice?” asks Harry.

“Positive,” nods Jeffrey. “I even snagged some dog scent to spray on us to mask our real scent.”

“Does it wash off?” asks Harry suspiciously.

“Oh, yeah,” reassures Dain.

“Excellent,” smiles Harry.

Indiana watches the coastline of a large seaport come into view. He sees a number of various breeds of dogs run to the docks to meet the ship. The ship eases into port. Sailors on the ship toss out the mooring lines to awaiting dogs.

A gangplank is extended from the ship to a dock and Mike leads Indiana and Pearl off the ship. A large Pit Bull dressed in a striped sailor’s shirt greets him.

“G’day, Mighty Mouse! Welcome to Howling Point!” smiles the Pit Bull. He slaps him in the left shoulder.

Mike grunts and grimaces. “Uh... thanks, Roy.”

Roy sees Mike’s injury. He points to it. “How in howlin’s name did that happen?”

“It’s a long story,” says Mike.

“I think you’d better tell it to me,” replies Roy. “Come along with me to the pub. I’ll treat you and your friends to a drink.”

Indiana looks around the lively pub at all the various dogs chatting, laughing and drinking various drinks. He, Mike, Pearl and the Pit Bull sailor Roy sit at a table near the back of the pub drinking various drinks and talking.

“So this old medallion thing takes away what makes you Mighty Mouse?” asks Roy.

“Right,” nods Mike. “It’s already taken it away. That’s why I was successfully shot. It can eventually be used to kill me.”

“Well, we can’t have that,” decides Roy. “You’re too good a mouse to not have around.”

“That’s where we need your help,” Indiana says, jumping in.

“Anything. Name it,” says Roy.

“We need a contingency of Pit Bulls to go with us to look for a second medallion. This one restores Mighty Mouse’s powers in full plus more. The Pit Bulls will serve as our protection,” requests Indiana.

Roy thinks it over. He nods, “I’ve got the guys for this. How many do you need?”

“How about half a dozen?” suggests Indiana.

“You got it. Where do you want to meet?”

Mike jumps back in. “We’ll meet you on the west side of Howling Point in an hour.”

Roy nods.

Harry's ship docks into Howling Point two hours after Mike's ship. But to the dogs that moor it, all they see is a ship full of dogs coming in, much to Harry's pleasure.

Harry and company walk through Howling Point unhindered thanks to their disguises. They walk clear through town. Harry holds up a hand and stops them all. He motions them all behind a building. Harry and Jeffrey peek out from behind it: they see Mike, Indiana and Pearl taking with seven huge Pit Bulls getting ready to leave the city.

"So where do we have to go?" asks Roy.

Indiana unrolls the map and shows Roy where they're all headed. "We're going here."

Roy cringes. "Oo. Right into Carcass Valley. Of course it's right in the worse spot."

"What's so bad about Carcass Valley?" asks Indiana.

"It's inhabited by vultures..." answers Roy.

"That's not so bad," shrugs Indiana.

"...that eat the flesh off your bones while you're still alive and kicking," he finishes.

"Ew," cringes Indiana.

"I see you've got a gun. I hope you've got a lot of ammunition," says Roy.

Indiana chuckles, "I'm loaded for vulture."

Roy laughs.

"Welp, let's get a move on folks. We've got a long journey ahead of us," says Indiana.

Everybody nods and heads for three vehicles, two Jeeps and a truck, and head out of town.

Harry and Jeffrey emerge from behind the building along with their accompanying party.

"So. Carcass Valley is it?" says Harry. "Well, fortunately for us, I happen to be friendly with Baron von Scratch."

"Who's that?" asks Jeffrey.

"The good Baron is the overseeing vulture of the all the vultures of Carcass Valley. He and I have worked together in the past. When I tell him of the opportunity he has before him now... well..." Harry lets the thought hang.

Jeffrey thinks it all through, then gives a slow grin.

"I know a faster way to Carcass Valley," says Harry. "Let us be off, gentlecats."

Indiana's fur on the back of his neck starts to rise as they get closer to Carcass Valley day two into their journey. The trees around them are all dead. There are vestiges of sun bleached animal bones are everywhere. The ground is pretty much barren dirt and rock. And it's very hot.

Indiana looks down at the map. He reads the ancient symbols in the certain spot of the Valley on the map.

Indiana's traveling group's vehicle come to a stop.

"We're here," announces Roy.

Indiana looks up. He sees they're overlooking a deep valley, more like a shrunk down version of the Grand Canyon sans river. Carcass Valley is full of dead trees, rocks, a number of caves, and many, many sun bleached animal bones. A sea of them.

"Lovely," says Indiana without much excitement.

Roy spots a small path that leads down into the base of the Valley. "We can get down there," he indicates pointing to it.

Indiana nods.

Everyone gets out of their vehicles. The Pit Bulls each carry high powered rifles. Roy takes the lead, followed by Indiana, then Mike and Pearl, then the six Pit Bulls. They carefully make their way down the path to the base of Carcass Valley.

Harry, Jeffrey, their accompanying cats, and a giant vulture watch Indiana Jones and his party make their way down to the Valley floor from a hidden ledge.

"And you say Mighty Mouse is mighty no longer?" asks the vulture.

"Indeed, my dear Baron von Scratch," affirms Harry. "The talisman we currently hold stripped him of his powers. *All* of them. All that we have to do now is put this talisman around his neck and recite a certain phrase, and Mighty Mouse will be no more."

"And will I get to feast on his remains?" asks the Baron with intensity.

"Well, of course. That is what we agreed upon. I am a cat of my word," smiles Harry.

"Excellent," grins the Baron.

Indiana walks on edge in the middle of the floor of Carcass Valley. The bones go above his head in height, and they're absolutely everywhere.

"So what are we looking for?" asks Roy, breaking the quiet.

"We're looking for a certain cave," answers Indiana. "Although with all these bones around, it may be tough to spot."

"How do we know what cave to look for?"

"There should be certain markings around the cave letting us know that that's the right one. I hope," replies Indiana.

"What are the markings?"

"A sun on the left, a star in the middle, a moon on the right, and a triangle underneath the three."

Everybody starts looking around for the markings, but they don't see them anywhere.

Roy spots something, finally. "I see something above a cave to the left. It looks like a circle with squiggly lines coming out of it."

"That's a sun marking," nods Indiana. "Okay. Look for the star and the moon."

Everyone starts looking.

Pearl chirps up. "I see a diamond with straight lines coming out from each side above a small cave right ahead of us!"

Indiana nods, "That's the star. The moon should be somewhere to the right of us."

Everybody starts looking to the right.

Mike finds it. "I see it! Directly to your right, Indy! Over a small cave! A circle etching!"

“Great job, Mike,” smiles Indiana. “Now, let’s figure out where these three points would join on the ground here.”

Indiana walks back a few paces and does a quick measurement. He crouches down. He sees the spot he wants is covered in bones. He starts digging the area out. Mike comes over and helps him. The dig down to a large rock. Indiana tries lifting it, but it’s really heavy. Mike grabs a hold and helps lift it with a grunt.

“I wish they didn’t nail me with that stupid medallion,” grunts Mike.

“That makes two of us,” grunts Indiana in agreement.

They toss the rock away. They see a large hole to a stepped passageway has now been revealed.

“Well, well, well... lookie there,” smiles Indiana.

“You sure are good at this kind of thing,” compliments Mike.

Indiana chuckles. “Let’s head on down.”

Harry watches Indiana and party disappear below ground. He nods, “Gentlemen, it’s time.”

Indiana Jones leads his party through what can pretty much be called catacombs underneath Carcass Valley. They’d get lost easily if not for one thing. Each tunnel they’re supposed to turn at bears the same symbols: the sun, star, and moon over the triangle.

Indiana brings everyone to a halt with an upheld hand.

“What’s wrong?” asks Mike.

“What’s up ahead look like to you?” asks Indiana.

Mike looks. He shrugs. “It looks just like a long, straight passageway.”

“Yeah. It’s also out of place,” says Indiana.

“What do you mean?”

“All of the passageways we’ve been in have been winding. This one we’re going to be going through is a straight as a needle. Isn’t that a tad strange?” points out Indiana.

“I guess,” says Mike. He still doesn’t understand Indiana’s point.

Indiana digs out a large bone he snagged from the Valley floor earlier. He walks to just where the passageway starts and tosses the bone into the middle of the passageway. Everybody jumps when the wall slams from one side to the other, then goes back.

“Whoa,” says Mike.

Indiana nods. “Mm-hmm.”

“How’d you know about that?” asks Mike in amazement.

“Part of this job is just staying alive, pal,” answers Indiana with a half smile. He looks back down the passageway. “Now then, there’s go to be a switch to turn the thing off...”

Indiana starts looking all over. He looks all around, but doesn’t see a thing.

“Um, Indy?” calls out Mike.

“Yeah?”

Mike points straight up.

Indiana looks above his head. He sees a lever within the ceiling, but too high to reach. He chuckles, “Nobody ever thinks to look up.” He unhitches his bullwhip, then

flings it up there and wraps it around the switch successfully. He pulls the switch down, then loosens his whip free and re-hitches it to his belt.

“Let’s give her a little test run,” says Indiana. He pulls out another bone and tosses it into the passageway. All clear.

He grins, “Trust but verify. Let’s go, kiddies.”

Harry, Jeffrey and the Baron peek around a tunnel corner watching Indiana and company walk down the straight passageway.

“That brown-furred mouse is smart,” observes the Baron.

“That’s why he’s leading the way,” says Harry. “But after his purpose is served, he’ll make a fine entrée for your associates, I’m sure.”

The Baron chuckles.

CHAPTER FIVE

Indiana leads his group to the edge of a pit. The catacombs continue on the other side. He looks up and sees a thick, stable beam above them all. He smiles, unhitches his whip, then lashes it around the beam.

“Okay, everybody. Swing over the pit using my whip. Just follow my lead,” he instructs. He swings over the pit, then swings the whip over to Mike.

Mike swings over, then swings the whip over to Pearl. She follows. The rest follow in the same manner until they’re all across. Once all are safely over, Indiana loosens his whip and re-hitches it to his belt. They continue down the passageway.

Harry and company follow a bit behind. “Baron, would you be so good as to fly us all over this troublesome pit?”

The Baron nods and carries everyone over the pit in his talons.

“Thank you ever so,” grins Harry. “Let us be off.”

They walk down the passageway after Indiana Jones and his party.

Indiana leads his party into a huge cave filled with stalactites and stalagmites. There’s even a small waterfall in the back of the cave. Indiana’s sharp eyes see something black behind the waterfall on a stone pedestal. He walks quickly toward it.

Indiana sees the black thing is a wooden box. He grabs it and withdraws it from behind the waterfall. Mike walks up from behind him.

“Is that it?” asks Mike.

“Let’s find out,” says Indiana. He opens the box.

Mike and he blink. There are two silver triangle medallions in the designs of pieces of Swiss cheese attached to silver neck chains.

“Which one’s the right one?” asks Mike.

“Oh not-so-Mighty-any-more Mouse!” calls out a familiar, Bass voice.

Mike spins around. His eyes go wide. “Oil Can Harry! How did you...?”

As Mike keeps Harry busy, Indiana looks the two medallions over closely. He sees one of them has four certain symbols inscribed onto its point. The other doesn’t. He puts the inscribed medallion into his shoe, and keeps the other in the box. He turns to face Harry and company.

The Pit Bulls all whip up their rifles and point them at Harry and company.

“I would highly suggest you relinquish your weapons,” advises Harry.

The cave is suddenly filled with an influx of vultures dive-bombing the Pit Bulls. They drop their guns and cover their heads as Harry laughs. Harry’s cats run forward and tie all of the Pit Bulls up in thick roping. The vultures fly back and wait against the cave walls. Three vultures bring in three small iron cages.

“Mr. Dain,” smiles Harry. “I know you have a bit of unfinished business with Mighty Mouse, don’t you?”

Jeffrey gives Mike an evil grin. He splays his claws and starts stalking toward him.

Indiana unhitches his whip. Unfortunately he’s blindsided by a cat and pinned to the ground. “Jeffrey! Don’t do it!”

Mike glares at Jeffrey angrily. He cries out as he feels fire across his face as Jeffrey rakes him with his claws and sends him flying.

“No!” cries out Pearl. She tries to run to the fallen Mike, but Harry grabs her and holds her back.

“Finish it, Mr. Dain!” orders Harry.

“No!” cries Pearl.

Jeffrey bends down and puts the golden talisman around Mike’s neck. He stands and starts to say the final incantation. “*Baca rhet mis tora granda rhet!*”

The green light forms around Mike. Mike howls in pain and starts to writhe on the ground. He starts losing muscles mass fast.

“Oh my god...” whispers Indiana.

“Yes!” exclaims Harry in sheer joy. “Finally I’ll be rid of that troublesome rat! Mr. Dain, put that wasted shell of a mouse into the cage until he finally expires.”

Jeffrey nods and grabs the frail and thin Mike by the back of the neck. He tosses him into a small iron cage. Mike doesn’t move. He’s totally unconscious.

Pearl is crying a river. The Pit Bulls are totally shocked. Indiana is royally ticked off.

Harry struts over to Indiana. He sees the box at Indiana’s feet. He picks it up and opens it and withdraws the silver medallion. “Ah. The Caseus Argenteus. Too bad you’re too late. You got out-thunk, Dr. Jones. You came on a fool’s errand. And because Mighty Mouse is no more, that means you can’t go back home, either. But, then again, you’re going to be a fine feast for my associates, so you will serve a final purpose.” He chuckles and grins.

Harry turns and faces his cats. “Gentlemen, place Pearl and Dr. Jones in their own cells to let them watch Mighty Mouse die. Then we’ll return later to retrieve them for their dinner date.”

Indiana struggles as he thrown into his small iron cell as Pearl struggles before she’s stuck in hers. Harry, Jeffrey, the Baron and all the vultures leave, laughing about their victory, allowing Indiana and Pearl to think about their coming horrible fate.

Pearl stands in her little iron cage looking at the ailing Mike as Mighty Mouse crying. His face has the gray pallor of death, he lies in his own cell barely breathing. He’s still unconscious.

“Pearl,” calls out Indiana from his cell.

Pearl looks at him.

“Do you want to save Mighty Mouse?” he asks.

“What can we do? We’re stuck in here and he’s pretty much dead!” wails Pearl.

Indiana smiles and takes off his left shoe. He pulls out a silver triangle object on a silver, thin chain necklace.

Pearl’s eyes go wide. “The other talisman! But, how did...?”

“I knew Harry and Dain would take my bag, so I hid it where they wouldn’t think to look,” grins Indiana.

Pearl grows despondent again. “That’s all fine and good, but we’re still stuck in here. How are we going to get out?”

Indiana takes off his other shoe and comes away with lock picking tools. He holds those up to show Pearl with a mischievous grin. “Never leave home without ‘em.”

Pearl actually laughs. They might have a chance!

Indiana puts his shoes back on, then picks his cell door lock successfully. He then works on Pearl's cell door lock and gets her out.

They both walk over to Mike's cell. Mike lies on the cell floor barely breathing. He has the body mass of Indiana now, a grayed-out skin tone, and the talisman around his neck is glowing. Indiana picks his cell door lock.

"How can we save him? Asks Pearl sadly. "He's so far gone!"

Indiana pulls out a pocket knife. "Let me have your hand."

She does so. She yelps when Indiana cuts her palm. "What did you do that for?"

"The old scroll said that for the talismans to be joined, they have to have the life blood of the 'god-mouse' and his life love joined together as well. That means you, sweetheart," explains Indiana.

Indiana opens a hidden area in the talisman he holds and drops a few drops of Pearl's blood in it, then recluses the talisman. He then removes the other gold triangle talisman from around Mike's neck.

Indiana grabs Mike's right hand and removes his white glove, then cuts his palm. He opens a hidden area in the silver talisman and drops a few drops of Mike's blood in it, then closes it.

Indiana places both talismans around Mike's neck and stands. He motions for Pearl to stand back, and then he starts saying some odd mumbo-jumbo:

"Baca rac, baca hath banai. Tora musu hath banai..."

As Indiana speaks, an intensely bright white light forms around the talismans. Indiana and Pearl have to shield their eyes. The light envelops Mike. Indiana continues to speak for another thirty seconds, then finishes.

The light finally fades. Indiana and Pearl uncover their eyes. Pearl gasps and brings a hand to her mouth.

Indiana's eyes go wide. "Whoa."

There stands Mike, wearing a cocky grin, twice as big in muscle than he originally was as Mighty Mouse, with glowing golden eyes. The talisman has turned into a single talisman, silver and gold mix.

"I doubt *anybody* is gonna want to cross you, Mike," decides Indiana.

"You saved my life," says Mike in a new voice, one that sounds like water rushing into a shore as the tide comes in, one to match his muscle.

"Well, I thought turn about is fair play," jokes Indiana.

Mike chuckles.

Pearl gingerly walks up to the new and improved Mighty Mouse. She looks him up and down. "You're... amazing!"

"You're not so bad yourself," grins Mike. "Well, I've got to work on a new voice," decides Mike. He starts to pace, saying the same sentence over and over again with varying voice attributes, pitches, etc. He finally gets one that sounds most like his original country-boy voice. "I think I'll use this one," he says.

Indiana and Pearl chuckle.

Mike switches back to his original voice. "Well, the Baron will be coming back soon to take a chunk out of me..."

Indiana chuckles. "He's gonna find out the hard way that might be kind of tough to do now."

Mike chuckles in return. "Let's mess with their minds. We'll lock ourselves back in our cages. I'll fake like I'm still knocked out. Then when they're about ready to eat me... well..." Mike lets the thought hang.

"I like the way you think, Mike," grins Indiana.

They all get back into their cages and lock the doors.

"Should we pretend that we're really sad?" asks Pearl.

Indiana thinks about that. "Yeah... really ham it up. Go for the Oscar."

"What's an Oscar?"

"An award for really good acting in movies."

"Oh!" smiles Pearl. "I can do that." She starts to fake cry.

"Beautiful, doll," grins Indiana. He fakes like he's really depressed.

"This is gonna be good," laughs Mike. He lies back down in his cell, faking unconsciousness.

Five minutes later The Baron and a few vultures come back into the cave. He sees Pearl crying, Indiana Jones moping, and Mighty Mouse dead as a doornail. He grins. Excellent.

The Baron walks up to Indiana. "You're cordially invited to join us for dinner," he grins.

Indiana just glares at him.

The Baron chuckles. He walks over to Mike's cage. He gets a questioning look to his face. Mike's got a *lot* more meat on his bones than the last time. And that's an understatement. He opens the cage and bends down. He turns Mike over. His eyes go wide.

Mike is giving him a very unsettling grin and looking right into his eyes with his own glowing golden ones. "Boo."

The Baron jumps back and slams the cage door shut. He looks at his vulture friends nervously. "Gentlemen... we have... a... problem..."

The cage shakes violently behind the Baron.

The Baron jumps. "Just a little one..."

"What kind of problem?" asks a vulture. "I'm hungry."

"Yeah," nods another vulture. "Just get 'em outta the cages and let us chow down."

"Yeah," whispers Mike behind the Baron so he can hear him. "Just let me outta the cage."

The Baron jumps again as Mike shakes his cage violently once again.

"I don't think that would be a good idea," offers the Baron.

"Why not?" asks a disbelieving vulture.

All of the other vultures start asking the same question.

One vulture has enough. How tromps over to the Baron. "What's goin' on behind you?"

"Mighty Mouse isn't exactly dead," deadpans the Baron.

"Well, eat him alive," retorts the vulture. "We do it all the time."

The Baron puts a wing around the vulture's shoulder. "I tell you what. If you can take a bite out of him, then I'll join you. If not, I'm outta here."

The vulture shrugs. "Okay."

The Baron steps out of the way. The other vulture walks up to the cage. He blinks in surprise when he sees Mike. He was expecting the thin, frail Mighty Mouse. Not this behemoth of muscle grinning at him.

“Well go on,” urges the Baron. “Eat him!”

Indiana gets Pearl’s attention. “This is gonna be good.”

The vulture shrugs again and unlocks the cage. Mike just continues to smile at him.

“Um...” says the vulture, “you wanna come outta there?”

“Sure,” grins Mike. He walks out of the cage. “Where do you wanna start?”

“Um... I think I’ll try the shoulder,” decides the vulture.

Mike laughs. He looks at Indiana and continues to laugh. “He actually answered me!”

The vulture tries taking a large bite out of Mike’s shoulder. He grunts as he doesn’t get a thing. Mike just continues to smile.

“Well?” asks the Barron.

The vulture pulls away from Mike. “I think I broke my beak.”

All the other vultures start to murmur.

Mike chuckles and dusts off his shoulder.

“If you’ll excuse me, I think I’ll be going now,” rushes the Baron. He flies his tail out of there as fast as he can.

Mike walks through the vultures and rips the iron cages apart with the greatest of ease. He then turns around and grins at all the vultures.

The vultures get the message. They hightail it out of the cave.

Indiana and Pearl are laughing.

“That was great, Mike,” laughs Indiana.

Mike takes a little bow, “Thank you. Thank you very much.” He walks over to his Pit Bull friends and tears the ropes off of them all.

“You know what, Mighty Mouse,” observes Roy, “you look a whole lot nastier. You sound a whole lot nastier, too.”

The other Pit Bulls nod in agreement.

Mike looks himself over. He raises an arm and flexes its muscle. He gives a sly grin in satisfaction.

Indiana gives off a whistle. “Oil Can Harry and Jeffrey are Mighty Mouse meat.”

Mike drops his arm. “We should be heading on home. Harry and Jeffrey are probably getting back to Mouseville spreading the news I’m out of the picture. I think it’s time I go back and haunt them.”

Everybody nods and chuckles in agreement.

Indiana leads everyone back through the catacombs. Mike flies everyone over the pit. When they come to the straight passageway, Indiana stops everyone.

“Five’ll get you ten Harry’s re-set the trap,” says Indiana. “Care to get us through Mike?”

“My pleasure,” smiles Mike.

Mike walks into the passageway. Immediately the stone wall flies toward Mike from his right. Mike throws his right fist out and hammers the rushing wall. The entire wall explodes into pieces.

“Whoa,” says Roy.

“Got some new muscle, there, huh, Mike?” calls out Indiana.

Mike turns around and gives him a mischievous smile, “You could say that.”

Indiana chuckles then leads the rest of the group through the passageway.

CHAPTER SIX

Harry decided to fly back to Mouseville from Howling Point so he could begin his taking over Mouseville as soon as possible. So, he chartered a plane disguised as a dog again, along with Jeffrey and his accompanying cats, and headed back.

Meanwhile, Indiana Jones, Mike, Pearl, Roy and the rest of the Pit Bulls are making their way back to Howling Point in the vehicles they came in. They are reaching the half-way point of their journey when they are surrounded by a pack of hungry wolves.

Mike takes the talisman off from around his neck and hands it to Indiana. His improved powers don't change, much to Indiana's surprise.

One of the wolves leaps at the Jeep carrying Indiana, Mike, Pearl and Roy. Mike jumps into the air and meets the wolf. He grabs the wolf by its neck with one hand and holds it in the air. The wolf thrashes around, trying to free itself, but Mike's strength is unequalled, and he holds him fast.

Another wolf jumps at the second Jeep. Mike sees him out of the corner of his eye and lunges at him. He gives him a hard backhand and sends him flying way out of sight.

Indiana whistles, "Man, don't get on your bad side, Mighty Mouse."

Mike throws the first wolf in his hand at the other wolves and knocks them down like bowling pins. The wolves get the idea and run off. Indiana, Pearl, Roy and company cheer. Mike takes a little bow.

The rest of the journey is uneventful. When they reach Howling Point, Mike, Indiana and Pearl take their leave and with Roy and the Pit Bulls well. Mike then flies himself and Indiana and Pearl back to Mouseville.

Oil Can Harry stands in front of Mouseville City Hall behind a podium before throngs of mice holding everyone's attention. He's just told them of his successful hand in the demise of Mighty Mouse.

"Yes, mice of this fair metropolis!" announces Harry. "Mighty Mouse is no more! I have vanquished your 'champion!' Prepare now to meet your destiny... to become fodder for myself and my cats!"

Mice of all ages start screaming and running amok as cats start chasing them all around. Harry laughs maniacally.

Mike flies Indiana and Pearl back over Mouseville late in the night. Mike halts in mid-air and looks down at a certain section of town questioningly.

"What's up, Mike?" asks Indiana.

"There's a cat chasing a young mouseling through the back alleyways of Mouseville," answers Mike.

"Go get him, Mike," smiles Indiana.

Young Tommy Limburger runs his little tail off through Mouseville's back alleys as fast as he can. He keeps glancing over his shoulder to see that huge, hungry cat running after him.

I wish Mighty Mouse were still alive! he thinks to himself.

Tommy hears a voice that sounds like a rushing river call out above him, "Duck!"

He does what he's told immediately as the cat chasing him howls and goes flying over his head, and slams into an opposing building's brick wall, then drops to the pavement.

Tommy raises his head. His eyes go wide when he sees a very-much-alive Mighty Mouse with twice the original muscle he had and glowing, golden eyes standing in front of him. "Holy Swiss cheese!"

Mike chuckles.

"Are... are... are you a... a... a ghost?" stammers Tommy.

Mike smiles, "Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated."

Tommy sees Pearl and Indiana walk up behind him, also wearing smiles.

"Nice dive bomb there, Mighty Mouse," grins Indiana. "Cat never knew what hit him."

"That was the idea," laughs Mike. "A signature Mighty Mouse attack run."

"So...," says Tommy, still not quite sure Mike is really there for real. "You're not dead?"

"Far from it," smiles Mike. He helps Tommy to his feet.

Tommy looks Mike up and down. "You're a *lot* bigger than I remember seeing you before," he observes.

Mike looks himself up and down. Then he flexes his muscles and smiles and nods in satisfaction.

Tommy's eyes go wide. "Whoa!"

"A complimentary power-up from Oil Can Harry and Indiana Jones," grins Mike.

The cat finally starts to stir. He groans and lifts his head, spitting out a few teeth as he does so. He balks at Mike standing right in front of him, arms across his chest, playful smile on his face.

"Wakey, wakey, kitty-cat," chuckles Mike.

"Oh my god..." says the cat in shock.

Mike turns serious and walks up to the downed cat. He gets in his face. "Where's Oil Can Harry?" demands Mike.

"I don't know," shrugs the cat.

Mike tosses the cat into the air, leaps into the air himself, then re-catches him by the throat and keeps holding him off the ground. He leans in. "Take a guess."

Okay, now the cat is terrified. "Um... I think the last place I heard him say he was at was Mouseville City Hall," he offers.

Mike nods. "Have a nice flight back to Cat Town..." He tosses the cat up into the air then gives him a hefty backhand.

The cat howls as he rockets clear across town back into Cat Town.

"Nice trajectory," compliments Indiana.

"I aim to please," grins Mike, dusting off his hands.

Oil Can Harry leans back in the comfortable leather office chair in the Mayor's office he's recently taken over with his feet up on top of the large desk. His hands are threaded behind his head and he wears a self-satisfied smile.

Jeffrey Dain comes walking into the office. "Harry, sir? Your public awaits."

"Ah, yes. My adoring masses," grins Harry. "It is time for my daily address, is it not?"

“Indeed it is, sir,” smiles Jeffrey.

Harry starts to ponder, “What shall I talk about? Sweeping reforms in cat healthcare? Taxes? Probate law?”

Jeffrey Dain thinks as well. “How about the establishment of a new holiday celebrating the defeat of Mighty Mouse?”

“Hmm,” nods Harry in agreement. “A fine idea, Mr. Dain. A fine idea indeed. We shall make it the day you spoke those fateful words and left him in the cave a broken mouse. Let us address the masses.”

Mike and Indiana Jones walk toward Mouseville City Hall incognito dressed in long coats and slouch hats to hide their faces. As they get closer, they see a huge mass of mice of all ages gathering around the front of City Hall. They merge into the crowd and blend in.

Mike glances down and behind him as he hears a *very* young voice calling out, “Lemme through! Lemme through! I wanna see, too!”

A big, fat mouse from the rougher side of the tracks standing right beside Mike blocks the mouseling’s way so he can’t get through.

Mike scowls. “Why don’t you let the little guy through?”

“No way,” disagrees the fat mouse. “This is my spot. Nobody gets by me.”

The fat mouse gasps as he feels a hand stronger than a steel vice instantly around his throat start lifting him off the street. He grabs onto the wrist attached to the hand and tries to pry it off. He feels huge muscle like living steel cables under the coat sleeve.

“I hate rude mice,” growls Mike, golden eyes glowing.

The fat mouse just grunts.

“You’ve just forfeited your spot,” spits Mike. He spins around and tosses the fat mouse clear out of the mass of mice.

He screams as he flies.

Mike turns back around and ushers the mouseling to stand beside him.

The young mouseling looks up at Mike with awe. “You sure are strong, mister.”

Mike smiles at him.

The mouseling tries to look again. “I still can’t see very well.”

Mike picks him up and sets him down on his right shoulder. “Better?”

“Yeah!” grins the mouseling down at Mike. “Thanks, mister!”

Mike chuckles.

Everyone’s attention focuses on Jeffrey Dain and Oil Can Harry coming out to a podium out in front of City Hall. Jeffrey stands guard as Harry speaks.

“Fair citizens of Mouseville!” begins Harry. “I come before you today with joyous news. I have decided that you all need a new way to have a moment of celebration in your pitiful lives. And so, I have established of new annual holiday that we *all* shall observe together. The holiday will be called the ‘*Ad Mortalis de Mus Magnus*’. Or, ‘Ad Mort’, for short.”

“Oh... that’s nice,” snorts Indiana right beside Mike.

“What’d he say?” asks Mike.

“It was Latin for the ‘Day of the Death of Mighty Mouse’,” answers Indiana.

“Oh, Brother John,” groans Mike.

“We have to celebrate that?” asks the mouseling, horrified.

“No. You don’t have to celebrate my death,” replies Mike to him.

“Oh. Good,” nods the mouseling. He thinks about Mike’s answer a second. “Wait a second...” He looks Mike over. *Really* looks him over. He carefully lifts Mike’s hat and recognizes Mike’s face. He lights up like a light bulb when Mike grins at him.

“Holy cow! Migh-!”

Mike covers the mouseling’s mouth gently and recovers his own head with his hat. “Shh. I don’t want Harry knowing I’m here yet.” He uncovers the mouseling’s mouth.

“Why not?” whispers the mouseling.

“I’m going to start walking through the crowd to him, then I’m going to challenge him in public. We’ll see how big a talker he is then,” says Mike with a sly smile.

“I can’t wait to see this!” laughs the mouseling.

Mike sets the mouseling down, then starts leading Indiana through the throngs of mice as Harry continues his speech.

“Yes, mice of Mouseville, on this day of celebration, I want you all to come to Main Street and watch as my handpicked cats beat up little mice dressed in replicas of Mighty Mouse’s costume,” says Harry. “Doesn’t that sound like a fine way to start the day?”

The mice just murmur. Not really.

“I don’t think you have very many good ideas, Harry!” calls out very different type of voice for Harry to hear.

Harry looks out all over the throngs of mice. “Who dared yell that to me?”

“Down in front, Harry!”

Harry looks down in front for the owner of the rushing-river-sounding voice. A large mouse in a long trench coat and slouch Fedora hat gives him a little wave from the front row.

“Who are you?” demands Harry.

“I’m an old friend,” smiles Mike mysteriously.

“No mouse is a friend of mine,” snarls Harry. “Mr. Dain, bring the impudent rodent to me.”

“With pleasure, sir,” nods Jeffrey. He gives Mike a dark grin and splays his claws. He makes his way down and grabs onto Mike’s shoulder. He’s surprised when his claws don’t penetrate the mystery mouse’s flesh.

Mike give Jeffrey a small smile. “I think I’ll return a favor...”

Jeffrey sees Mike’s golden eyes start to glow before he’s hammered with a backhand that sends him rocketing up the City Hall steps and slamming against a support column. The column explodes and Jeffrey is down and out for the count.

Harry can’t believe what he just saw. His mouth hangs open.

He hears the mystery mouse chuckle below him, “He had that coming since the bear in the museum.”

Harry spins around. He pales out when Mike removes his hat and reveals his face.

“Hello, Harry,” greets Mike.

Harry is shaking his head. “No... no... you’re supposed to be dead! You were Baron von Scratch’s entrée!”

“Oh, yeah! Him...” Mike nods. He starts walking up the stairs toward Harry.

Harry starts backing up.

“He found out I’m a little...” Mike lets a torrent of strength flow through his body and flexes his muscles. They rip out of the trench coat revealing his costume.

Harry jumps.

“...*tough* to eat,” chuckles Mike.

The mice all watching start chattering. Is it really him? Is he really *not* dead? And why is he so big with a different voice and eyes?

By this time Indiana has shed his costume and is back in his “uniform.” He’s checking up on the downed Jeffrey Dain. He gives off a soft whistle. “Man, Mighty Mouse. You did some damage to Dain. I wonder if he’s alive...”

Harry spins around in horror. Mighty Mouse killed Dain with one shot? Oh, please god, no! This is turning into a nightmare!

Jeffrey groans as Indiana moves his head.

“Oops! He’s alive!” announces Indiana.

Harry cries out as he feels like he’s been hit like never before. Mice cheer as he slams into the top crest of City Hall, then drops to the stairs. Harry fights to stay conscious. He tastes blood in his mouth and feels it coming from his nose. He knows his jaw’s been broken. He raises his head and sees Mike grinning at him, his right fist in his left hand.

“That was a basic right cross to your snout, Harry. That was *not* my hardest hit. As you can see I’m *very* nasty now. And all thanks to you and Jeffrey Dain,” says Mike.

“No,” snarls Harry, refusing to believe it. “It’s impossible!”

“Show him, Indiana,” suggests Mike.

Indiana holds up the golden and silver amulet.

Harry looks at it. It’s the Caseus Aureus and Caseus Argentus *combined*. They did it. “Then that means...” He looks at Mike with shock.

“Bingo!” grins Mike. “I’m gonna be around for a *very* long time. Long past your great-grandkittens. And with the power-up I got, too? Well...” He lets that thought hang.

By this time, Jeffrey has regained enough of his faculties to know when to try and escape. And that’s just what he does. He clamors to his feet and takes off down the street.

“You stay with Harry, Mighty Mouse,” says Indiana. “Jeffrey’s mine.” He takes off after Dain.

Jeffrey Dain runs through Mouseville’s alleyways like a rat possessed. He comes to a dead end and is about to double back when he hears a familiar mocking voice behind him:

“Jeffrey, Jeffrey, Jeffrey... where do you think you’re going?”

Dain spins around and sees his one-time archaeology professor leaning against a building wearing a crooked smile. “Professor Jones... this isn’t good old Earth...” He splays his claws and prowls toward him.

Indiana draws his gun and cocks it, then points it right between Jeffrey’s eyes. Jeffrey freezes.

“You’re absolutely right. It isn’t,” agrees Jones.

They two anthropomorphs stare each other down for what seems an eternity. Jeffrey suddenly knocks Indiana’s gun hand upward with his clawed left hand, causing the gun to fire into the air.

Indiana thinks fast and jumps backward, drawing his bullwhip. Before Jeffrey has a chance to rake him with his claws, Indiana lashes him across the snout with his whip. Jeffrey cries out and stumbles back.

Indiana lashes the whip around Jeffrey's ankles and yanks as hard as he can. Jeffrey goes crashing to the pavement.

Indiana turns around at the sound of running feet. He sees a few of Mouseville's finest mouse officers come into the alleyway. "Hello there, officers. I've got Jeffrey Dain all wrapped up and ready to go for you here."

One of the officers looks at the rest. "Mighty Mouse was right! He did take care of him for us!"

The officers shackle Dain as Indiana releases him from the whip and reattaches it to his belt. A very gloomy Dain is led away with a very happy Indiana following behind.

EPILOGUE

Indiana Jones is walking the hallways of the Archaeology Department of the college with Mike beside him once more. Mike gets quite a few wide-eyed looks from passing students and faculty as not only because he's dressed in his costume, but also because he makes Arnold Schwarzenegger look like a toothpick.

They enter Marcus Brody's office to find him reading the paper once again. He looks up and drops it in shock upon seeing Mike.

"Good god!" he exclaims.

"Hey, Marcus," grins Indiana.

"Hello, Mr. Brody," greets Mike in his new voice.

Marcus gets up from his desk and gives Mike a thorough look over. Mike was big before, but now he's just massive! And his eyes... he's never seen golden eyes before...

"What happened to him?" asks Marcus.

"Well, sit back and I'll tell you a tale," replies Indiana.

An hour later Indiana wraps up the story. "So now Mike here is immortal with power beyond imagination, and Harry and Jeffrey Dain are in the clink for a very long time."

"Amazing," says Marcus. "By the way, you've been gone a full semester."

Indiana cocks an eyebrow and looks at Mike, "Time flies when you're having fun."

"And Brad Gershwan has put up quite a stink about it as well," continues Brody.

Indiana moans, "God, not him."

"Who's Brad Gershwan?" asks Mike.

"Professor of Celtic History and a royal pain in my ass," deadpans Indiana. "He's the guy that I had you shake hands with at the mixer before."

"Oh, him," nods Mike.

Brody nods as well, "Yes. He has insisted that unless you bring something of value back with you from this 'expedition' that you should be put on leave for a time."

Jones wilts, "Great."

Mike holds up the amulet. "You mean something like this?"

Indiana's eyes go wide. "What the...?"

Mike offers it to Marcus, who takes it and starts looking it over.

"This is exquisite, Mike. Where is it from?" asks Marcus.

"It's an ancient amulet from my dimension," answers Mike. "It made me how I am now. It's what Indiana and I went after. It's called the *Caseus Aureus et Argentus*."

"But, Mike, I thought that your museum would..." stammers Indiana.

"Well," says Mike, interrupting him, "I talked it over with Dr. Chedderarm and we decided that it would be better for you to have it."

Indiana is honestly touched. "Thanks, Mike."

"You're very welcome, Dr. Indiana Jones," smiles Mike.

Everybody jumps at the sound of Marcus Brody's office door slamming open and a snotty voice yelling out, "Charlene told me you were in here, Jones!"

Everyone turns to see Brad Gershwan gallivanting into the office followed by a bruiser of a man behind him.

“Professor Gershwan! You have no right to be...!” protests Marcus.

“So!” exclaims Brad snottily, ignoring Marcus completely. “Back from your little ‘field trip’, Dr. Jones? Where’d you go? Back to you’re little fantasy world of talking cats and rodents?” He looks and sees Mike. He looks him up and down. “So that’s it. A muscle-head from a circus, huh? I should have guessed. Well, I’ve got my own muscle here now. We’ll see who’s left standing now, big shot.”

Brad looks at the big guy in a suit just inside the door. “Bruno. Like I was sayin’ earlier... kid gloves...”

Bruno nods and slams his right fist into his left hand.

Indiana sees Mike’s muscles ripple and his eyes start to glow. He decides to warn Brad, even though the idiot really doesn’t deserve it. “Um... Brad... I wouldn’t do that, if I were you.”

“Well, I’m not you, Jones,” snorts Brad. “I hope your insurance is paid up.”

Indiana takes a step back out of the way and raises his hands. “It wasn’t nice knowing you.”

Bruno glares down at Mike. Mike just calmly looks back. Bruno throws his right fist as hard as he can into Mike’s stomach. It doesn’t work exactly as he plans. Bruno grunts. Mike just stands there.

Brad wonders what just happened. “Bruno... what’s going on?”

Bruno withdraws his hand and starts massaging it. “I think I broke a couple fingers.”

“What?” squeals Brad. “How?”

“Hitting him,” answers Bruno. “It was like hitting a brick wall.”

“Well...” stutters Brad. “Hit him in the jaw!”

Bruno slugs Mike as hard as he can across the jaw. Mike goes with the hit. There’s a loud “crack!” Bruno yelps and starts shaking his hand out.

“Damn! I broke it!” curses Bruno.

Mike looks at Bruno with an amused grin. “Hey, Bruno...”

Bruno looks up and is met with a backhand that sends him crashing through the office wall, flying across the lot and slamming into a parked Pontiac, denting in the driver’s side door. He’s out for the count.

“Oo,” cringes Indiana.

Brad is in shock. He can’t believe what Mike just did. He looks back at Mike in horror and sees Mike looking at him like he’s a five course meal.

“I don’t think he liked your little circus comment, Brad,” observes Indiana.

Brad starts backing up as Mike starts walking toward him. “S-s-stay away from me, you freak of nature!”

Brad jumps as Mike traps him against a wall and slams his two fists right on either side of his head into the wall.

“You know what, Brad?” advises Indiana. “I don’t think you should call him any more names. Unless you want to become part of the Archaeology Department’s curriculum...”

Mike gives the terrified Brad a sweet smile.

Indiana whispers into Brad’s ear, “I think you should apologize to him.”

“S-s-sorry,” stutters Brad to Mike.

Mike grins and yanks his fists out of the wall, then backs off.

Brad closes his eyes and drops to the floor, head in his hands.

"You enjoyed that, didn't you?" asks Jones to Mike.

"A little," shrugs Mike.

Indiana chuckles, "So did I."

"Who is going to pay for all of the damage to my office?" asks Marcus.

"Take it out of Brad's paycheck," suggests Indiana. "It wouldn't have happened if he didn't start something."

Marcus thinks it over and sees Indiana's reasoning. "True."

"Well, I have to be going," announces Mike.

"Sure you can't stay for dinner?" asks Indiana.

"Sorry. I have to get back," replies Mike. "But the door's always open for you to visit me. You, too, Marcus."

"See you 'round, Mike," waves Indiana.

Marcus waves to Mike as well as he leaves. He looks at the amulet. "It really is quite beautiful. I have just the place for it in our new wing."

"Well," says Indiana, "we can discuss my honorarium over dinner and champagne tonight... *Brad's* treat."

Marcus laughs.

THE END